

LET'S WORK TOGETHER

The shattered and increasingly unfulfilled hopes of black people have given rise in 1967 to a summer of so-called riots or rebellions. What should we do that will be of the greatest help in the face of these circumstances? How can we determine what are the true priority needs? Who are the people in the black community with whom we should deal?

The Tri-City Citizens' Union for Progress in northeastern New Jersey has adopted as its program to meet the basic and urgent needs in the black community in the most extensive and continuing way a plan of operation called community organization for development or C.O.D. Its rationale is set forth in Nathan Wright's award-winning book, BLACK POWER AND URBAN UNREST, on pages 104-110.

Briefly the plan calls for the implementation of a program, already in progress, whereby the diverse insights, talents and resources of every segment of the black community in a city or region may be brought together. This will enable the black community as a whole (1) to set its own priorities in the light of total needs, (2) to work for much-needed unity within the perilously fractured black community, and (3) to organize and involve diverse groupings of black people who have hitherto been hard to reach and whose needs and resources are vital to the task of black self-development.

The C.O.D. plan assumes that specific programs for housing, education, and for social welfare should arise only out of the common and most widely representative thinking by the black community and so be initiated with the broadest possible support.

An executive director with secretarial help and a staff initially of six organizer-trainers would work to pull together such organizations as exist in the black community, promote the closest possible coordination and facilitate with technical skills the organization of the unorganized portions of the black community. A Community Leadership Task Force, comprised of white decision-makers, would relate the white community to C.O.D. in an ongoing way. The program presently centers in Greater Newark but extends to the Paterson and Jersey City areas. Common problems call for common bonds.

The budget for the first year would call for:

(1) An executive director and office staff	\$28,000.00
(2) Six organizer-trainers and aides	47,000.00
(3) Office, travel, and allied expense	25,000.00
TOTAL	\$ 100,000.00

The inclusion of more affluent elements of the black community in Essex County in particular should enable the project to move most quickly and realistically toward self-support. Religious, business and civic groups are being asked to subscribe support. Foundation and other help is needed for various types of program funding and expediting, some of which programs are already being planned.

The Tri-City Citizens' Union for Progress has general monthly meetings, with more frequent meetings of its growing number of committees and constituent organizations. The C.O.D. is designed to build into the black community a mutually supporting bond of both organizational unity and operational harmony which will facilitate the black community's much-needed self-development into self-sufficiency and self-respect.

It is our hope to make the C.O.D. into a model as an instrument absolutely basic to the hitherto unattained empowerment of black people in every city or region in the nation for self-determination.

We invite your participation in facilitating this highest priority need for black people to "get themselves together" to plan in breadth and depth collectively for their own needs.